

# the ROADRUNNER

Nebraska Department of Roads

Fall 2016



**TRANSPORTATION  
INNOVATION ACT**

**BUILD NEBRASKA ACT**

*See story on next page*



# BNA/TIA Final Projects Announced

It's been a great year for transportation in Nebraska and that was capped off last month as Governor Pete Ricketts, U.S. Senator Deb Fischer, former Nebraska Governor Kay Orr, and Director Kyle Schneweis traveled the state announcing \$300 million in transportation construction investments. Along with those eight construction projects, the agency will begin design work on an additional 12 projects and planning on two others. With these announcements, 100 percent of Nebraska's Expressway System will be in design, planning, construction or have been completed.

The projects, which will be funded through the Build Nebraska Act (BNA) and the Transportation Innovation Act (TIA), are the first ones to be selected since NDOR updated its project prioritization process for capital improvements projects. The new prioritization process includes a more robust assessment of how transportation projects impact the economy and public input is more heavily considered. Engineering performance continues to be analyzed to address safety and operations of the system. NDOR used its new prioritization process to help select projects, while also balancing many other important considerations, such as geographic inclusion, corridor completion, previous investment on a corridor, progress on the Expressway System or High Priority Corridors, Interstate or Expressway connectivity, and the availability of supplemental funding, at either the local or federal level.

"Because NDOR's top priority is to deliver a great transportation system, rather than build a few great projects, I couldn't be happier to announce this round of Build Nebraska Act and Transportation Innovation Act projects," Director Schneweis said. "We know these projects will have a positive impact on our transportation system and our economy. We also know these projects are well supported by Nebraskans because we've talked extensively with and listened carefully to stakeholders through our expanded project prioritization process."

All eight construction projects will begin by 2024, with the exception of US-275, Scribner to West Point, which will be the state's first design-build project and will start earlier. NDOR will identify a timeline for all other construction projects after further analysis and conversations with partners.

The construction projects announced last month represent only a portion of the funds the state has available for capital improvement projects. NDOR made that decision purposefully so that as needs change, the agency will have the flexibility to address changes and leverage future opportunities.

This announcement follows an extensive public outreach effort involving more than 2,000 Nebraskans who weighed in on the project prioritization

process, suggested projects for consideration and discussed project priorities through workshops, town halls, community meetings, and online through NDOR's website.

*"NDOR's top priority is to deliver a great transportation system, rather than build a few great projects."*

- Director Schneweis

"NDOR has rewritten the book on capital improvement project selection to ensure that it better reflects the connection between transportation investments and the economy as

well as recognizes local buy-in from communities," Schneweis, said. "By inviting and encouraging input from a broad cross-section of Nebraskans, NDOR assures that economic impacts, along with other important factors, are more fully considered in the selection process."

For more information on all the projects announced, visit: <http://roads.nebraska.gov/projects/grow-ne/cap-improve/selection/>.

## Projects Selected for Construction

Project Name	Length (miles)	Cost (millions)
I-680 from Fort St. to Irvington in Omaha, 6-lane interstate	1	\$29
N-7 from Bassett to Springview, 2-lane highway modernization	2	\$2
US-6 at 192nd St. and West Dodge Road in Omaha, Interchange improvements	1	\$17
US-26 from Minatare to US-385, 4-lane divided highway	18	\$60
US-75 at Chandler Road North (NB) in Omaha, Add lane to northbound lanes	3	\$10
US-77/Fremont Southeast Beltway, 4-lane divided expressway	4	\$26
US-83 from McCook to North Platte, Super 2	60	\$60
US-275 from Scribner to West Point, 4-lane divided expressway with a bypass around Scribner	21	\$90

## Projects Selected for Design Work

I-80 Newberry Interchange improvements and L56G from Platte River to US-30 in North Platte, 4-lane divided highway	2
N-50 from Louisville to Springfield, 4-lane divided highway	9
N-92/US-275 East of Yutan, 4-lane divided highway	10
N-370 from Gretna East to I-80, 6-lane divided highway	4
N-370 from I-80 to Bellevue, 6-lane divided highway	12
US-30 Grand Island East Bypass, 4-lane divided highway	6
US-30 from Kearney to Grand Island, Super 2	36
US-75 from Nebraska City to Murray, 4-lane divided expressway	17
US-77 Wahoo to Fremont, 4-lane divided expressway	16
US-81 from York North, 4-lane divided expressway	43
US-275 from West Point to Pilger, 4-lane divided expressway with bypass	29-30
US-385 from Alliance to Chadron, Super 2	59

## Projects Selected for Planning Work

I-80 Interchange(s) in Omaha/Sarpy County, New interchange(s) construction
Lincoln East Beltway, 4-lane divided highway



# Working Together to Create a Brighter Future



**Kyle Schneweis**

For more than a year we've been talking about becoming more entrepreneurial, engaging and empowering at NDOR. And, I'm pleased to say I've seen evidence of those guiding principles being implemented at every level of NDOR. From the preparation for the upcoming launch of the Lean Six Sigma training to the recent statewide tour announcing projects selected using our new prioritization process,

made possible by the Build Nebraska Act and the Transportation Innovation Act, there's tremendous energy and anticipation around the advancements that the NDOR team has and continues to make!

As I crisscross the state talking to stakeholders and employees, I am impressed – but not surprised – by the reasonable, thoughtful, and measured approach Nebraskans take when discussing transportation. I continually hear comments around the importance of customer service and efficiency along with balancing the state's dedication to fiscal responsibility with the need to expand our capacity to undertake calculated risks to deliver long-term improvements. I am grateful to have a team, both internal and external, to help us think through and further develop ideas and opportunities to modernize business practices, collaborate with stakeholders and improve customer service.

While I very much look forward to working through the complex problems the transportation industry faces – I'm also keenly aware that we're not operating in a vacuum. Through the StEEP (Stakeholder, Engineering, Economics, Priorities) process we've raised the bar, and the public's expectations, for an agency that operates effectively with open and honest dialogue around how to build the best transportation network possible. I heard an analogy once that seems very appropriate today. You work really hard to make lots of small deposits in your account at the Bank of Public Credibility, but it's very easy for one single large withdrawal to send you into overdraft. We need to be mindful of building our reserves through small deposits with every public interaction.

NDOR has much to be proud of but I challenge you to not let the momentum fade. We have secured the foundation for advancements in modernization through funding for projects and new tools to deliver projects faster, but there is still work to be done. As I look back over the last year, I want to say "thank you" for your hard work. More importantly, I look forward to our collective challenge and opportunity: working together we can meet increased expectations and continue to create a brighter future for transportation in Nebraska. ■

## the Roadrunner

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Communication Division  
1500 Highway 2  
PO Box 94759  
Lincoln NE 68509-4759  
402-479-4512  
[www.roads.nebraska.gov](http://www.roads.nebraska.gov)

### Governor Pete Ricketts

### Highway Commission

Mary K. Gerdes .....	Doug Leafgreen
E.J. Militti, Jr. ....	Ronald Books
David Copple .....	Greg Wolford
James Kindig .....	Jerome Fagerland

### Administration

Roads Director .....	Kyle Schneweis
Deputy Director .....	Moe Jamshidi
Deputy Director .....	Khalil Jaber

### Divisions

Bridge .....	Mark Traynowicz
Business Technology Support .....	Bill Wehling
Communication .....	Vicki Kramer
Construction .....	James Knott
Controller .....	Michael Keays
Government Affairs .....	Andy Cunningham
Human Resources .....	Sue Larson
Legal Counsel .....	Jeff Schroeder
Materials & Research .....	Mick Syslo
Operations .....	Tom Sands
Plan. & Proj. Development .....	Brandie Neemann
Program Management .....	Amy Starr
Rail & Public Transportation .....	Ryan Huff
Right-of-Way .....	Robert Frickel
Roadway Design .....	Mike Owen
Traffic Engineering .....	Dan Waddle

### Districts

District 1 .....	Thomas Goodbarn
District 2 .....	Timothy W. Weander
District 3 .....	Kevin Domogalla
District 4 .....	Wesley Wahlgren
District 5 .....	Doug Hoebet
District 6 .....	Gary Thayer
District 7 .....	Kurt Vosburg
District 8 .....	Mark Kovar

Copy Editor .....	Linda M. Wilson
Layout Editor .....	Diane German

The information in this newsletter is contributed by employees, retirees and friends of NDOR.

# NEBRASKA

Good Life. Great Journey.

DEPARTMENT OF ROADS

# Keays New Highway Finance Administrator

Michael Keays is the new Highway Finance Administrator for the Nebraska Department of Roads. He succeeds Marilyn Hayes, who retired with 46 years of service.

Born in the New York City area, Keays lived in several large cities during his childhood years, including Omaha, where he graduated from Burke High School. After serving a term in the United States Air Force, he returned to Omaha, and earned his bachelor's and master's degrees in Business Administration from Bellevue University. He is licensed as a Certified Public Accountant.

Keays began his professional career in Omaha in 1982. He worked in public accounting, as well as serving as Controller and Corporate Secretary for Godfather's Pizza's corporate headquarters, and Controller for the Sisters of Mercy during their consolidation process. Keays also served as the Department of Administrative Services State Controller, and most recently, served as the Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer of the Omaha Housing Authority.

Keays said he has enjoyed the opportunities his career has provided thus far, including involvement in various functional roles, as well as managing organizations in both good and bad times. He looks forward to his new role at NDOR, adding, "The Controller Division is made up of very dedicated team members who are passionate about the work they perform toward the mission of the agency. It is the people that make the work enjoyable, and that motivate you to be an important part of the team."

As far as future goals, Keays noted, "I look forward to being an integral part of the movement towards better communication across the districts and divisions relative to more collaborative work on financial and operational stewardship."



**Michael Keays**

Regarding his management approach, Keays stated, "I believe in open, transparent communication with staff and management, so that all parties feel equally involved in the outcomes of the organization."

Michael and his wife, Debbie, have three grown children: Christopher, who is a Navy veteran, and now a full-time student; Michelle, who is an emergency room nurse; and Jackie, who is a busy soccer mom. He is also blessed with seven grandchildren, all whom are great students and athletes. He and his wife enjoy everything related to the grandkids' school and sporting activities, including football, basketball, hockey, soccer, volleyball, swimming, and track and field.

In his spare time, Michael also enjoys sports and muscle cars. Most importantly, Michael enjoys being young at heart and is always striving for personal improvement.

## Marilyn Hayes Retires

Born and raised near Gothenburg, Nebraska, Marilyn Hayes graduated from Platte Valley Academy in 1969 and began working at NDOR right out of high school, first as a typist/telephone operator in what is now the Operations Division. In 1971, she began working in the Controller Division, working her way up from typist to accounting clerk, to accountant in the Budget Office in 1977, moving into the Project Finance area in 2000, then Budget and Finance Manager in 2003. In 2012, she was promoted to Finance Administrator.

Marilyn began taking night and weekend classes in 1989 at UNL, transferring to Doane College, where she earned her Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Administration in 2001.

Marilyn and her husband, Don, have been married 45 years. They have two children, Vicki and Stetson, and one granddaughter. Retirement plans include gardening, quilting, tatting and spending time with her granddaughter. ■

## Brandie Neemann Wins Prestigious Dr. L. I. Hewes Award

Brandie Neemann, Planning and Project Development Engineer at the Nebraska Department of Roads in Lincoln, was honored as recipient of the Dr. L. I. Hewes Award on June 29 during the annual conference of the Western Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (WASHTO) in Laramie, Wyoming. This is the first time that a Nebraskan has won the prestigious award.

"Brandie's contributions to NDOR really reflect the essence of the Hewes Award. She has continually found ways to incorporate innovation and efficiencies in business practices to streamline program and project delivery practices," said NDOR Director Kyle Schneweis. "We are very proud of Brandie's accomplishments. I'm thrilled WASHTO selected her for the award."

Neemann was presented with a cash award of \$1,000 and a plaque. According to WASHTO President and Idaho Transportation Director Brian W. Ness, the award committee was impressed by many of Neemann's qualifications, including her outstanding accomplishments in the development of the highway program in the West. Her contributions as an active member of the WASHTO Emerging Leaders Program were also recognized.

The Dr. L. I. Hewes Award was created in 1951 by the Western Construction Magazine, a journal devoted to engineering and construction in the western states, and annually recognizes the recipient's outstanding contribution to national highway development programs. The award was initiated to honor Dr. Laurence Isley Hewes, former Deputy Commissioner of the Bureau of Public Roads, Western Region (predecessor of today's Federal Highway Administration), who directed the Federal highway construction programs in the 11 western States and the Territories of Alaska and Hawaii, and became one of the principle founders of WASHTO.

Do you know of an opportunity to recognize the good work done by NDOR employees? Send potential awards with nominee information to Linda Wilson at [linda.wilson@nebraska.gov](mailto:linda.wilson@nebraska.gov) with subject line Award Nominee.



## Good Life. Great Journey.

On July 12, NDOR Director Kyle Schneweis joined Governor Pete Ricketts to unveil the new State of Nebraska brand, "Good Life. Great Opportunity." as well as the new Department of Roads brand, "Good Life. Great Journey." This is a philosophy that represents the Director's vision for how employees look at their time with NDOR and helps communicate the desired experience for travelers on our state roads.

"When Nebraskans travel our roads we strive for more than just providing a route. We are providing a connection – a connection that brings families together, sparks economic growth, or positively impacts a community's way of life," Director Schneweis said.

The unified brand is the first of its kind in state history, according to Governor Ricketts, reflecting Nebraska's historic strengths and projecting a vision for the future. The brand was developed by Nebraska-based marketing and communications agency Firespring during a process that included gathering input from diverse groups of Nebraskans across the state through meetings and online surveys. The project began as a rebranding effort for the Department of Economic Development and expanded to encompass all state agencies.

The new brand is an opportunity for state agencies to be unified as one, yet still flexible enough to adapt and capture their own essence. State agencies may customize the "Good Life" by changing the last two words to fit their missions. For example, in addition to NDOR's "Great Journey," the Department of Labor picked "Great Connections," the Nebraska State Patrol chose "Great Tradition" and the Department of Motor Vehicles opted for "Great Future."

NDOR has begun implementing the new brand "Good Life. Great Journey." and will continue to do so over the next several months. As the Governor stated in the press conference, implementation will be done in a fiscally responsible manner. Though this brand will eventually replace the traditional yellow diamond NDOR brand, the Department will not be making large scale changes quickly. For questions, please contact the Communication Division. Vicki Kramer will be working with Districts and Divisions throughout the implementation to ensure continuity of use. A video of the launch can be found at <http://goodlifegreatopportunity.com/> ■

## "Friday Safety Message" Campaign Continues

Motorists traveling on I-80 in Nebraska during the summer months may have noticed short safety reminders on overhead Dynamic Message Signs (DMS), including "Stay Wide Awake, Take A Break" and "Phone Down, Eyes Up, Seatbelt On." Those messages will continue to be displayed into the fall months and beyond, according to Austin Yates, NDOR's ITS Engineer.

The Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR), in partnership with the Nebraska State Patrol, launched the "Friday Safety Message" (FSM) campaign the week of May 20 to kick off the summer travel season. A new safety message is displayed each Friday, for 24 hours from 12:00 a.m. Friday to 12:00 a.m. Saturday, on overhead DMS along I-80 and I-129, reminding motorists to consider all aspects of driving safety.

According to Yates, the FSM Committee initially developed 16 messages that were displayed on DMS through the end of August, with plans to continue the messages indefinitely. "We've had some success with these messages, which are also tweeted every Friday. We average about 7,400 looks, 250 clicks on the tweet and 20 retweets."

Yates noted that FSMs are typically posted on 30 DMS each week, since many of the state's 55 DMS are already in use for construction projects or events. Also, the signs aren't posted on urban I-80 in Omaha.

Each "Friday Safety Message" includes an updated number of Nebraska traffic deaths and a reminder that coincides with major events taking place that particular weekend. For example, the first message on May 20 focused on travelers headed to Omaha for the State High School Track Meet. DMS boards included the reminder, "Save your speeding for the track." Other messages included "Don't Pokemon and Drive," in reference to the popular online game, and "Zero Fatalities is our Gold Medal" to coincide with the Summer Olympics.

Yates said an online method is now available for NDOR employees to submit future FSM ideas for consideration. The message requirements are: maximum three lines of text, with a maximum 18 characters per line (spaces count against the total). Employees are encouraged to think of safety messages which may tie in with activities or events. To submit a message idea: go to Interchange, on the Teams tab, under Friday Safety Message at <https://interchange.nebraska.gov/teams/friday-safety-messages/submit-a-suggestion/> ■



# Starting the Process of Process Improvement

**By Ryan Huff**  
Rail & Transit Engineer

As government employees, we provide valuable services to the public on a daily basis. We work hard to provide these services in a timely and cost-efficient manner. We also know that changes to our business occur regularly – technology, statutes, resources, cost and customer expectations, to name a few.

Despite these changes we often do not look at whether our processes should change to reflect the change around us. As a result, processes lag behind or become cumbersome, for us or for our customers. This is never our desire; instead we want simpler and easier ways to do our jobs, while providing the best experience for customers. That is why Governor Pete Ricketts is bringing new tools to state government to address our process problems.

The goals of process improvement are simple: reduce waste, improve production, enhance customer satisfaction, improve quality, and enhance cost savings while strengthening the bottom line. For process improvement activities, the state of Nebraska uses what is called “Lean Six Sigma,” a methodology that unites the best parts of two different improvement approaches – “Lean” and “Six Sigma.”

The United States Navy and Army use the “Six Sigma” methodology, as do several federal agencies, such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and state governments in Ohio, Minnesota and Iowa. Improvement efforts can be handled as a short- or long-term project or as a multi-day blitz event called a Kaizen. This involves mapping the current process and creating a new one.

Roads employees have already participated in two Kaizen events so far, one in partnership with the Nebraska Department of Motor Vehicles and another focused on the consultant payment process. In each instance, process steps were saved, resources were reduced, products were delivered faster and customer satisfaction was increased.

These successes have been supported by the Center of Operational Excellence (COE), housed in the state’s Department of Administrative Services. The COE provides the guidance and training needed for agencies to engage in process improvement. Currently, the COE has free online Lean Six Sigma White Belt training available via NDOR’s Employee Development Center (EDC). This entry-level training is aimed at educating state employees about basic concepts and terminology.

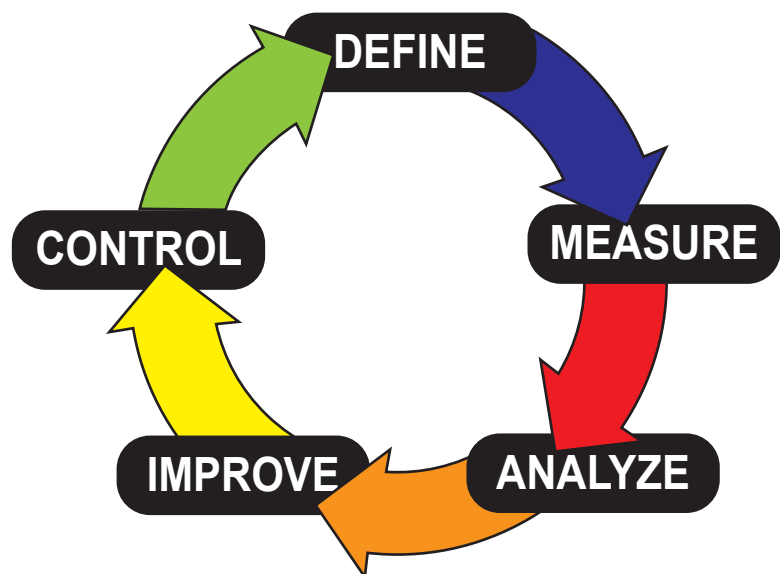
A key goal of the initiative is to have all state employees White Belt-certified. Beyond White Belt training are more advanced levels of training,



e.g., Yellow Belt, Green Belt, etc. The COE is currently helping selected agencies roll out Yellow Belt training and launch morning huddles.

Aside from many benefits already described, process improvement activities support Director Kyle Schneweis’ strategic 3E initiative. The techniques and tools associated with process improvement enable workers to challenge existing practices and be innovative. By doing so, workers are empowered to be entrepreneurial. Lastly, improving any process requires us to engage with each other and with our customers.

At Roads, we will be ramping up our efforts in the coming months to expose employees to process improvement concepts through the use of training, daily huddles and projects. Stay tuned for updates on Lean Six Sigma. ■



# NDOR's Three E Team Embraces Culture Change



In the fall of 2015, Director Kyle Schneweis announced NDOR's three guiding principles: be entrepreneurial, be engaging and be empowering. He asked all employees to focus on applying these guiding principles in their day-to-day interactions with their co-workers and transportation partners.

Early in 2016, the "3E Team" was announced and 25 team members were selected, comprised of employees from NDOR's Central Headquarters as well as highway districts across the state. Team members were divided into three groups – a planning team, a support team and a power team, with emphasis on discussing ways that these guiding principles can be embodied in the culture of all NDOR employees.

Three E team members met in March to develop their vision statement: "Be a team of peers embracing change and new ideas to spark a culture shift where all employees at all levels feel valued, respected and proud to work at NDOR." This was followed by development of a charter. During their April meeting, team members established six strategies for what they wanted to accomplish. This

included: 1) communicate and evaluate; 2) support and collaborate; 3) learn and grow; 4) time and space; 5) build and value; and 6) invest and challenge.

During their May meeting, team members used these strategies to come up with over 80 ideas on how to accomplish the strategies, which were narrowed down during the team's final meeting in June to six tactics for implementation. Three E members collaborated to identify leaders and form teams to successfully implement each tactic over the next year. During Director Kyle Schneweis' September Director's Forum, tactics were identified, along with targeted teams and team leader(s):

Recently, the 3E Collaboration Team met via Web-Ex for a kickoff discussion of various methods of collaboration and how to build a collaboration-friendly environment.

In addition to this initial group of tactics, more have been proposed by the 3E Planning Team. These additional tactics are intended to help promote and advance NDOR's culture of innovation. More information will be provided on each of these teams and their progress in the coming year. ■

## 3E Planning Team

Dave Carroll, District 4  
Jodi Gibson, Materials & Research  
Travis Haberman, Human Resources  
Chris Hassler, Program Management  
Claire Inbody, Plan. & Proj. Development  
Roger Kalkwarf, District 1  
Kyle Keller, Roadway Design  
Monty Koch, District 3  
Chris Kuehner, District 2  
Ronda Lewis, District 6  
Rich McKenney, District 8  
Jamie Mikkleson, Roadway Design  
Matt Neemann, Traffic Engineering  
JeanE Plihal, Controller  
Jason Volz, Construction  
Austin Yates, Operations

## 3E Support Team

Nancy Burdine, Communication  
Korey Donahoo, Roadway Design  
Verneda Kelly, Director's Office  
Mackenzie Schlautman, Communication  
Danny Rotert, Burns & McDonnell

## 3E Power Team

Kyle Schneweis, Director  
Suzy Fredrickson, BTSD  
Jeni Lautenschlager, Communication  
Carrie Williams, Human Resources

## 3E Team Tactics for Implementation

### **Customer Satisfaction Survey**

Team Lead: Matt Neemann  
*Conduct Customer Service Satisfaction Survey*

### **Improve Public Trust**

Team Lead: Jeni Lautenschlager  
*Provide framework to help better inform and educate the public on high impact projects*

### **Conduct Policy Survey**

Team Leads: Erick Strack & Gerri Waechter  
*Identify policies that are pain points for employees to impede work*

### **Recognize Employees for Good Work**

Team Lead: To Be Determined  
*Recognize people for everyday innovations and improvement on Interchange*

### **Innovation Challenge**

Team Lead: Korey Donahoo  
*Create ways to encourage and recognize good ideas that improve our work*

### **Cross Function Collaboration Challenge**

Team Lead: Claire Inbody  
*Take a good idea and make it better*

# Happy Anniversary — Interstate Highway System!

June 29, 2016, marked the 60th anniversary of the law signed by President Dwight D. Eisenhower that kicked off the funding and construction of the nation's 47,000-mile Interstate Highway System.



The “Dwight David Eisenhower System of Interstate and Defense Highways,” is often called the greatest public works project in history. The Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956 created the Highway Trust Fund as a dedicated source of funding for the interstate highway system, on a pay-as-you-go basis through the federal gas tax and other motor-vehicle user fees.

Today the national interstate system consists of approximately 47,000 miles of roadway, linking nearly every sizable town or city in the country. While interstate highways only represent 2.5 percent of all roadway lane miles in the country, they carry 25 percent of all vehicle traffic, including 40 percent of total truck miles traveled. There are approximately 15,000 interchanges and over 55,000 bridges.

## Building Nebraska's Interstate System

The interstate in Nebraska is the backbone of the state highway system, carrying the bulk of the cross-country traffic safely and quickly. Within Nebraska, it stretches from Omaha in the east to the Wyoming state line, west of Kimball. In Nebraska, it took 17 years, from 1957 until 1974, to complete the interstate.

In 1974, Nebraska became the first state to complete its 455-mile portion of the I-80 Interstate at a cost of \$435 million, an average of \$950,000 per mile. This was accomplished by building the most difficult parts first (in the Omaha area).

On October 19, 1974, a crowd gathered at the spot five miles west of Sidney to mark the opening of the final mainline segment of I-80 in Nebraska. A “Golden Link,” an embedded brass-top section of channel-iron, was placed across all four lanes of traffic at rest areas west of Sidney.

## Benefits Visible

Once I-80 was complete and operational, the benefits of the Nebraska interstate system were visible. The interstate system is responsible for dramatically improving our mobility, highway safety, quality of life and commerce. We have come to take for granted the benefits of the largest and most expensive project in the state's history.

In Nebraska, the volume of traffic has increased on the interstate system faster than on the non-interstate system, with 22% of all vehicle traffic occurring on the interstate system. The lowest traffic volume, or annual average daily traffic (AADT) occurs east of Chappell on I-80 at 7,300 AADT. The highest ranges are in Omaha, east of 72nd Street, at 173,500 AADT. Thirty-four percent of all truck travel in Nebraska takes place on the interstate system.

A natural commercial truck corridor lies between Michigan and California along I-80. In Nebraska, 15% of all traffic on the interstate is heavy trucks. One significant improvement over the past 10 years is the widening of I-80 to six lanes from Omaha to Lincoln. This has significantly benefited travel, and plans to complete the widening to Kearney will further reduce congestion.

## Preserve and Enhance

This increased use of our interstate system offers a major challenge to those tasked with maintaining a smooth, safe and efficient system for motorists. As funding allows, Nebraska will continue to conduct research to find new, improved methods and materials to preserve and enhance our state's transportation investment.

The 60th anniversary of the interstate system provides a tremendous opportunity to raise public awareness of this vital transportation network and to address its future. It will be up to future generations to make the commitment to increase research and funding needed to ensure that the interstate system remains a positive force in our daily lives. ■

Editor's Note: Additional resources listed below were provided by Don Butler, NDOR Transportation Planner III, including references for the national interstate system statistics. Nebraska statistics on the interstate system are from NDOR's 2015 vehicle miles traveled data.

[www.fhwa.dot.gov/programadmin/interstate.cfm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/programadmin/interstate.cfm)

[www.fhwa.dot.gov/interstate/faq.cfm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/interstate/faq.cfm)

[www.fhwa.dot.gov/infrastructure/intrstat.cfm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/infrastructure/intrstat.cfm)

[www.fhwa.dot.gov/policyinformation/statistics/2014/vm1.cfm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/policyinformation/statistics/2014/vm1.cfm)



# "Pulling Together" - 2016 NDOR Charitable Giving Campaign

"Pulling Together" was an appropriate theme for this year's State Employee Charitable Giving Campaign. NDOR employees pulled together and contributed \$69,477 to participating charities. NDOR employees comprised one of five teams competing in a virtual canoe race on the Platte River from the Wyoming state line eastward. Every \$240 given/pledged was worth one mile on the race. NDOR's giving amount allowed our canoe to travel almost to Kearney.

Contributions and pledges were recorded by division/district. Four units had record contributions, including District 5, District 7, Traffic Engineering and Right of Way. In seven units, more than 50% of employees pledged, including Director's Office (86%), Controller (75%), Program Management (71%), Rail & Public Transportation (69%), Right-of-Way (66%), Human Resources (63%) and Traffic Engineering (51%).

## Special Events

The second annual Tour de Roads bike ride at the NDOR Headquarters campus in Lincoln attracted 14 riders this year. Coordinated by Jim Pester, Communication Division, with cooperation from building and maintenance staff, a course for the race was set up around the 1400 and 1500 buildings with appropriate barricades to assure rider safety. The riders included Max Antoine, Brad Finch, Brad Zumwalt, Ed Kelley, Tim Foss, Clay Duncan, Kevin Krolkowski, Barb Gerbino-Bevins, Eric Gonzalez, Brad Garbers, Ben Fischer, Matt Wehrwein, Adam Kornfeld and Shirley Danahy.

Each rider was asked to designate one (or more) of the participating charities for sponsor support, and friends and coworkers signed up as sponsors, pledging either an amount per lap completed (up to 20 laps) or a single amount.

The race occurred on August 18 during the noon hour. The weather

was perfect—not too hot and with a slight breeze. Many coworkers came out to cheer the riders. Ben Fischer completed 29 laps in the half hour ride. Matt Wehrwein and Adam Kornfeld completed 27. Eric Gonzalez completed 21 and seven more completed 20. The riders had a great time, as did the spectators, and the ride raised \$1,883 for 21 designated charities.

The following week, on August 24 and 26, employees contributed baked goods for bake sales held in the NDOR cafeteria. The sale was coordinated by Trish Sanchez and netted \$315.

## Dual Effort

Central Complex was able to use the newly reinstituted cafeteria to help keep the Charitable Giving Campaign visible to employees. The four cafeteria vendors generously offered free meal coupons to use as gifts for Charitable Giving special events. Following the "canoe" theme, a framed silhouette of a moose and a bear paddling a canoe was hidden in one of the Central Complex buildings every night for two weeks. Whoever found it received a meal pass and had their name announced via email. Meal passes were also given to Tour de Roads

## Campaign Coordinators

*Overall Coordinator:* Bev Kellison

*Director's Office &*

*Gov. Affairs:* Verneda Kelly

*Bridge:* Sherri Bridges

*Business Tech. Support:* Trish Sanchez

*Communication:* Shirley Mitchell-Taft

*Construction:* Kendall Stege

*& Michelle Weigel*

*Controller:* June Weyers

*Human Resources:* Diane Holthus

*& Blane Osterman*

*Materials & Research:* Nicole Taylor

*Operations:* Janie Vrtiska

*Planning & Project Development:*

*Sandra Knippelmeyer & Linda Langdale*

*Program Management:* Cindy Hosler

*Rail & Public Transportation:*

*Charles Bowlby*

*Right-of-Way:* Jacki Schrotberger

*Roadway Design:* Linda Piening

*Traffic Engineering:* Bobbi Olson

*District 1:* Laura Pierce

*District 2:* Natalie Clark

*District 3:* Scott Brummond

*District 4:* Heather Vieth

*District 5:* Cindy Vergil

*District 6:* Karen Swedberg

*District 7:* Jan Collins

*District 8:* Erin Allen

riders, contributors to the Charitable Giving bake sales, and to several employees in a random drawing of those who returned their pledge cards or sponsored a division/district. Coordinators will be meeting to discuss what works and doesn't work to maximize giving in the next campaign. ■



Participants in the second annual "Tour de Roads" are joined by members of the NDOR First Aid Team.

# National Transit Conference Coming to Nebraska

By Kari Ruse

Rail & Public Transportation

Omaha has been selected as the host city for the 2017 National Rural and Tribal Technical Assistance Conference. The conference will take place October 29 – November 1, 2017, at the Hilton Omaha, 1001 Cass Street.

The conference is sponsored by the Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP) which is funded through the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). The RTAP mission is to address

the training and technical assistance needs of rural and tribal transit operators across the nation and to support state RTAP programs.

Omaha was selected based on a proposal that was prepared and submitted jointly by the NDOR Transit Section and the University of Nebraska. The conference will be hosted by NDOR, the University of Nebraska and the Nebraska Association of Transportation Providers (NATP). Previous conference locations

include Monterey, California and Denver, Colorado.

Approximately 450 transit professionals from across the country are expected to attend the 2017 conference in Omaha. Nebraska's State RTAP Program provides training for over 500 rural transit drivers and technical assistance to 57 rural transit agencies across the state. ■



## Transit Spotlight

### Blue Rivers Provides Public Transportation in Nebraska

By Kari Ruse

Rail & Public Transportation

Blue Rivers Area Agency on Aging (AAA) manages a public transportation system providing service in Otoe, Thayer, Gage, Jefferson and Nemaha counties. With 19 buses and minivans, service is provided within and between counties with substations based in Beatrice, Wymore, Fairbury, Auburn, Nebraska City, Syracuse and Hebron. Limited service is also available from rural communities to Lincoln.

Last fiscal year (July 1, 2015-June 30, 2016) Blue Rivers vehicles traveled 211,374 miles and provided 59,715 passenger trips. Operating expenses and vehicle acquisition purchases are supported with funds passed through NDOR from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the state.

Della Tuttle, a Beatrice resident in her 80s, says, "I just don't know what I would do if it wasn't for the bus. The drivers do a real good job, and I depend on it for many things very often."

For more information about the Blue Rivers Transportation System call Cliff Lindell at 402-223-1357. For a list of all transportation providers in the state visit our transit directory at <http://nebraskatransit.com/directory.php>. ■



Blue Rivers staff decorated one of their transit buses for the Homestead Days parade.

## Service Awards

Congratulations to these dedicated individuals for their work and continued service with the Department of Roads. They celebrate their service dates in June through December 2016.

### 50 Years

Gareld Adams, Plan. & Proj. Dev.

### 40 Years

Diane German, Communication

David Hall, M&R

David Holland, Right-of-Way

Micky Jacobs, District 2

Duane Lantz, Construction

Dwayne Livingston, District 6

Kirk Young, District 4

### 30 Years

James Baird, BTSD

Carsten Barger, District 3

Kelly Doyle, District 7

John Gorecki, District 4

David Hatfield, District 6

Rhonda Jamshidi, Plan. & Proj. Dev.

Becky Knudsen, District 3

Donnie Laughlin, District 1

Larry Mendoza, District 5

Jeff Nelson, District 3

Vera Paul, M&R

Kurt Vosburg, District 7

### 20 Years

Norman Anderson, District 3

Abraham Anshasi, Rail & Public Trans.

Daryl Behrends, Right-of-Way

Steve Billoft, Operations

Shawn Boutin, District 4

Kevin Briggs, Operations

Johnny Cooper, District 5

Mark Droppers, District 3

Galen Hines, District 4

Steven Kelle, District 1

Paul Kieper, M&R

Marshall Krcmarik, Rdwy. Design

Timothy Mullin, Right-of-Way

Melvin Ohri, District 7

David Olsan, District 1

Arvid Olson, Communication

Alan Paine, Rdwy. Design

Robert Sandman, District 3

William Swanson, District 1

Jim Truka, District 1

### 10 Years

Robert Arduser, District 3

Daniel Bates, District 2

Matthew Bouwens, M&R

Sherri Bridges, Bridge

Tyler Burbridge, District 1

Sharon Chapman, District 4

Danny Crownover, District 1

Richard Eggleston, District 6

Terry Fuehrer, District 6

Patrick Hodges, District 1

Ronald Howard, District 8

James Kantor, District 2

Andrew Lyons, District 1

Sandra Manley, Operations

Lyle Meyer, District 4

Michael Moore, District 2

Sean Owings, Traffic

Thomas Parks, District 5

Curtis Probasco, District 4

Carl Rorie, District 1

Elizabeth Salisbury, Operations

Theodore Schmidt, District 6

Betty Schneider, Right-of-Way

Brent See, District 6

Michael Shannon, District 4

Anajo Teel, District 2

Michael Terkildsen, Operations

Ben Tran, M&R

William Truscott, District 1

Steven Uhing, District 3

Brandon Varilek, M&R

Dell Vedder, District 1

Robert Wilkinson, BTSD

Michael Witt, District 8



# All <sup>in</sup> the Family

## Births

Randy and Heidi Pospisil are proud grandparents, twice. Daniel Ray was born on June 30 and Earl Jr. was born July 10. Randy is a Hwy. Bridge Designer I in Bridge.

Congratulations to Derek and Nicole Adkins on the birth of their daughter, Alexa Grace, born July 22. Derek is an IT Business Systems Analyst Supervisor in Construction under Materials & Research.

Congratulations to Brittney and Josh Sladky on the birth of their second son, Gage Alan, born May 6. Brittney is a Hwy. ROW Designer III. Kelly Behlen, Hwy. ROW Project Manager, is the proud grandmother.

Congratulations to Steve Nguyen and Katie Duong on the birth of their daughter, Charissa, born September 10. Steve is an Engineer in Materials & Research. Katie previously worked in Planning & Project Development.

Congratulations to Shane and Heather Sisel on the birth of their son, Landon Jay, born September 26. Shane is a Hwy. Environmental Biologist in Planning & Project Development.

Congratulations to Blayne and Amanda Renner on the birth of their daughter, Flora Davey, born May 18. Blayne is a Hwy. Environmental Biologist in Planning & Project Development.

Congratulations to Ray and Deb Branstiter on the birth of their first grandson, Bowden John, born on September 2. Ray is the District Operations and Maintenance Manager for District 3.

Congratulations to Tyler and Amy McBeain on the birth of their son, FinnLee Beckett Alexandar, born April 8. Tyler is a Hwy. Maintenance Worker Sr. at District 6 in North Platte.

Congratulations to Cathina Reeves, Hwy. Maintenance Worker, Sr. at North Platte on the birth of her son, Elliott Jameson, born June 1. Proud grandma is Rochelle Reeves, Staff Assistant I at the North Platte District Office.

Congratulations to Rochelle Reeves, Staff Assistant I at the North Platte District Office, on the birth of her fourth grandson, Ryker Leigh, born July 14. Proud aunt is Cathina Reeves, Hwy. Maintenance Worker Sr at District 6 in North Platte.

Congratulations to Alex and Kaitlyn Arthur on the birth of their daughter, Quinn Idell, born September 29. Alex is a Hwy. Construction Tech IV at District 6 in North Platte.

Congratulations to Jake and Tarin Adkisson on the birth of their daughter, Allie Kay, born August 25. Jake is a Construction Tech Supervisor at District 8 in O'Neill. Grandparents are JD and Susan Hoover. JD is a Hwy. Maintenance Crew Chief and Susan is a Staff Assistant at District 8 in Ainsworth.

Congratulations to Dennis and Diane Connot on the birth of their grandson, Logan, born July 12. Dennis is the Highway Maintenance Superintendent at District 8 in Valentine.

Congratulations to JD and Susan Hoover on the birth of their granddaughter, Hadley Jean, born September 7. JD is a Hwy. Maintenance Crew Chief and Susan is a Staff Assistant at District 8 in Ainsworth.

## Condolences

Condolences to Jim Hertzell on the passing of his mother. Jim is a Hwy. ROW Project Manager in Right-of-Way.

Condolences to Brandie and Matt Neemann on the death of Brandie's father. Brandie is the Planning & Project Development Engineer and Matt is an Engineer V in Traffic Engineering.

Condolences to Alison Bennett on the passing of her father. Alison is a Hwy. ROW Agent II in Right-of-Way.

Condolences to Tom Manning and family on the death of his father. Tom is a Hwy. ROW Agent II in Right-of-Way.

Condolences to Nina Johnson and family on the death of her grandmother. Nina is a Hwy. ROW Associate II in Right-of-Way.

Condolences to Linda (Zip) Masek on the death of her mother. Zip is a Hwy. Materials Designer in Materials & Research.

Condolences to Kevin Briggs, who lost his grandmother on August 2 and his mother on August 13. Kevin is an IT Business Systems Analyst/Supervisor in Operations.

Condolences to family, friends and past co-workers on the passing of Doug Prochazka. Doug retired in 2014 as a Hwy. Contracts Supervisor in the PS&E Section of Construction with 54 years of service.

Condolences to family, friends and past co-workers of Lavern Stueven on his passing. Lavern retired from District 4 in Grand Island in 1992.

Condolences to Sherri VanDiest on the death of her mother. Sherri is a Hwy. Construction Tech III at District 6 in North Platte.

Condolences to Tim Callahan on the death of his nephew. Tim is an IT Infrastructure Support Analyst at District 6 in North Platte.

Condolences to Josh Willard, Hwy. Project Manager and Justin Willard, Hwy. Construction Tech III on the death of their father. Both work at District 6 in North Platte.

Condolences to Justin Meeks on the loss of his stepfather. Justin is the Hwy. Maintenance Supervisor at District 8 in Merriman.

Condolences to Kent and Beth Lopez on the loss of her mother. Kent is the Hwy. Maintenance Supervisor at District 8 in Valentine.

Condolences to Jim Scholtes on the loss of his mother. Jim is a Construction Tech at District 8 in Ainsworth.

Condolences to Jason Lehn on the loss of his grandfather. Jason is the Construction Engineer at District 8 in Ainsworth.

## Weddings

Congratulations to Bryan Goldsmith and Kimberly Ruud who were married on May 7. Bryan is the son of Gil and LuAnne Goldsmith. LuAnne is a Cartographer Sr. in Materials & Research.

Congratulations to Ryan Wilson and Marie Shaw who were married on July 2. Ryan is the son of Rex and Linda Wilson. Rex is a Hwy. Utilities Coordinator II in Planning & Project Development. Linda is a Public Information Officer II in Communication.

Planning & Project Development congratulates Don Butler and Erin Bivens on their September 24 marriage. Don is a Transportation Planner in the Traffic Analysis Unit.

Congratulations to Mason Watson and Sarah Smith on their May 22 marriage. Mason is a Hwy. Construction Tech. II at District 6 in North Platte.

Congratulations to Robert Barnhill, and Pamela Ebert on their September 10 marriage. Robert is a Hwy. Maintenance Worker Sr. at District 6 in North Platte.

Congratulations to Corvin and April Hinrichs on their August 9 marriage. Corvin is the District Operations Maintenance Manager at District 8 in Ainsworth.

Dusty Foth and Bre Schrantz were married on May 21. Dusty is a Hwy. Maintenance Worker Sr. at District 8 in Springview.

Keith Mizner and Karmyn Brown were married on October 1. Keith is a Hwy. Maintenance Worker Sr. at District 8 in Springview.

## This 'n That

Congratulations to Denison Salisbury, who graduated from UNL in May and received a scholarship to attend Cleveland Chiropractic College in Kansas City. Denison is the son of Liz Salisbury, Administrative Assistant in Operations.

Congratulations to Doug Churchwell and his son Dustin who coach the Senior Legion Class C Malcolm Baseball team and helped lead them to a District and State Championship. Doug is a Hwy. Quality Assurance Manager in Materials & Research.

Congratulations to Sue Gott on her retirement after 6½ years of service. Sue was a Printing Technician III in Communication.

Congratulations to Louise Bettenhausen on her retirement after 18 years of service. Louise was an Accountant I in Right-of-Way.

Congratulations to Bob Fischer on his retirement after 53 years of service. Bob was an Appraiser III in Right-of-Way.

Congratulations to Alice Billesbach on her retirement after 19 years of service. Alice was an IT Applications Developer Sr. in Business Technology Support.



### *All in the Family cont'd.*

Congratulations to Mary Vanderloop on her retirement after 31 years of service. Mary was an IT Business Systems Analyst in Business Technology Support.

Congratulations to Dennis Boyd on his retirement after 23 years of service. Dennis was an Engineer IV in Bridge.

Congratulations to Christine Trueblood on her retirement after 18 years of service. Christine was a Word Processing Specialist II in Communication.

Congratulations to Gary Mangen on his retirement after 46 years of service. Gary was Hwy. Quality Assurance Manager at District 2-Omaha under Materials & Research.

Congratulations to John Lochner on his retirement after 10 years of service. John was a Staff Assistant II in Operations.

Congratulations to Lloyd Peterson on his retirement after 43 years of service. Lloyd was a Hwy. Project Scheduler/Program Coordinator in Program Management.

Congratulations to Mike "Sam" Samuelson on his retirement after three years of service. Mike was Facilities Maintenance Manager in Operations.

Congratulations to Dale Peter on his retirement after 26 years of service. Dale was a Hwy. Traffic Data Collector II in Traffic Engineering.

Congratulations to Alan Brown on his retirement after 30 years of service. Alan was a Statistical Analyst III in Traffic Engineering.

Congratulations to Rose Braun on her retirement after 47 years of service. Rose was a Hwy. GIS Application Manager in Business Technology Systems.

Congratulations to Eldon Schoen on his retirement after 30 years of service. Eldon was a Hwy. Maintenance Superintendent at the District 1 Superior Street office in Lincoln.

Congratulations to Don Coover, Hwy. Maintenance Worker, Sr. at District 6 in Lexington, on his retirement with 25 years of service.

Congratulations to John "Tony" Trotta, Hwy. Maintenance Worker Sr. at District 6 in Big Springs, on his retirement with two years of service.

Congratulations to Jim Morphew, Highway District ROW Permit Officer at North Platte, on his retirement with 33 years of service.

Congratulations to Glenn Williams on attaining the Distinguished Toastmaster (DTM)

designation, the highest level of achievement in Toastmasters. The award is given for outstanding leadership and communication skills. Glenn has been a member of RoadToasters for the past 11 years and is the third person in the club's 47-year history to earn this award. He is currently serving as the District 24 Club Growth Director. Glenn is a Hwy. Cartographer Senior in Materials & Research.

Congratulations to Karla R. Smith, who was named the "2016 Nebraska Land Title Association (NLTA) Title Person of the Year" during ceremonies held September 15 at their annual convention in LaVista. Karla began her career in the title industry in the early 90s and has been employed in the Right-of-Way Division since 2005, where she is a Hwy. Right-of-Way Agent II.

Dillon Byre completed a 6-1 season playing the guard position on offense for the Lincoln Southwest High School Football JV Team. Dillon is the son of Dale Byre, Jr., Quality Assurance Manager in Materials & Research.

Traffic-Engineering – Accident Records welcomes new employees Christina Paulson, Statistical Analyst I, and Sarah Fisher, Statistical Analyst I.

## NDOR Events Calendar

### — October —

- 3-7 Drive Safely Work Week**  
[www.trafficsafety.org/drivesafelyworkweek/](http://www.trafficsafety.org/drivesafelyworkweek/)
- 5 National Walk to School Day**  
[www.walkbiketoschool.org](http://www.walkbiketoschool.org)
- 6 Letting**  
1:30 p.m., NDOR Auditorium  
Contact Kendall Stege @ 402-479-4528
- 7 Bd. Examiners for Co. Hwy. & City Street Supts.**  
Meeting: 8:45 a.m., Hwy. Commission Meeting Rm.  
Exam: 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., NDOR Auditorium  
Contact LeMoyne Schulz @ 402-479-4436
- 10 State Holiday – Columbus Day**
- 12 Blood Drive – Community Blood Bank**  
NDOR Central Headquarters  
Contact Diane Holthus @ 402-479-4580
- 12 RoadToasters**  
12:00-1:00 p.m., Hwy. Commission Meeting Rm.  
Contact Glenn Williams @ 402-479-3628
- 12-13 Operations & Maintenance Conference**  
Holiday Inn Conference Center, Kearney
- 16-22 National Teen Driver Safety Week**  
[www.teendriversource.org](http://www.teendriversource.org)
- 17-21 National School Bus Safety Week**  
[www.napt.org/resources/national-school-bus-safety-week.php](http://www.napt.org/resources/national-school-bus-safety-week.php)
- 21 Hwy. Commission Mtg./District 4 Program Hrg.**  
8:30 a.m. Grand Island City Hall  
100 East 1st Street, Grand Island, NE  
Contact Sarah Kugler @ 402-479-4871
- 26 RoadToasters**  
12:00-1:00 p.m., Hwy. Commission Meeting Rm.  
Contact Glenn Williams @ 402-479-3628
- 28 Bd. Public Roads Class. & Stds.**  
9:00 a.m., 5001 S. 14th (the "Hill"), Rm. 152  
Contact LeMoyne Schulz @ 402-479-4436

### — November —

- 2 RoadToasters**  
12:00 p.m.-1:00 p.m., Hwy. Commission Meeting Rm.  
Contact Glenn Williams @ 402-479-3628
- 4 Bd. Examiners for Co. Hwy. & City Street Supts.**  
10:00 a.m., Hwy. Commission Meeting Rm.  
Contact LeMoyne Schulz @ 402-479-4436
- 11 State Holiday – Veterans Day**
- 16 RoadToasters**  
12:00 p.m.-1:00 p.m., Hwy. Commission Meeting Rm.  
Contact Glenn Williams @ 402-479-3628
- 24-25 State Holiday – Thanksgiving**
- 11/25/16 - 12/11/16 Click It or Ticket Mobilization**

### — December —

- National Drunk & Drugged Driving Prevention Month**
- 8 RoadToasters Holiday Meeting**  
12:00 p.m.-1:00 p.m., NDOR Auditorium  
Contact Glenn Williams @ 402-479-3628
- 9 Hwy. Commission Meeting**  
8:30 a.m., Hwy. Commission Meeting Rm.  
Contact Sarah Kugler @ 402-479-4871
- 14 Blood Drive – Community Blood Bank**  
NDOR Central Headquarters  
Contact Diane Holthus @ 402-479-4580
- 12/16/16 - 1/1/17 You Drink & Drive. You Lose. National Crackdown**
- 21 RoadToasters**  
12:00 p.m.-1:00 p.m., Hwy. Commission Meeting Rm.  
Contact Glenn Williams @ 402-479-3628
- 26 State Holiday – Christmas**

To include a key event on upcoming calendars,  
e-mail [linda.wilson@nebraska.gov](mailto:linda.wilson@nebraska.gov)